

found out later that the congressional resolution was based on false information supplied by the administration.

The Vietnam War divided our people. It led to the deaths of thousands of American troops and countless innocent civilians. It undermined our moral leadership in the world. We went to war alone. We were isolated from our allies. It was a propaganda victory for our enemies.

There is more, Mr. Speaker. We propped up an often corrupt government that couldn't figure out how to rule. We kept waiting for South Vietnamese troops to stand up so we could stand down. The Vietnam War squandered our Nation's treasure. It diverted us from solving our own domestic problems.

We said the war was all about spreading freedom. But the people of the country we invaded saw it as a foreign occupation. The occupation went on year after year. It passed from one administration to another. Our leaders kept telling us victory was just around the corner if we put more troops in. It devastated the country we were trying to save. It was a political, economic and moral catastrophe for America.

That was Vietnam. But it sounds exactly like Iraq. Today we are repeating the same terrible mistakes in Iraq that we made 40 years ago in Vietnam. Some of the Members of this House who support our occupation of Iraq lived through Vietnam. They have had 40 years to think about it. Yet they still miss the point. The doctrine of preemptive war is not suited to America because we are not warmongers. The American people do not believe in shooting first and asking questions later.

There is one other mistake we made back then that I hope we won't repeat, but I am afraid we will. The war in Vietnam spread to another country when we bombed Cambodia. Today, there is growing evidence that the administration is getting ready to spread the war in Iraq to another country. That would be Iran. About a week ago, the administration warned that Iran would face serious consequences if it proceeded on its current course. We all wonder what that means. Does it mean another round of shock and awe? Another country for our reckless leaders to bomb?

But the administration needs to consider the "serious consequences" that America will face if we attack yet another Middle Eastern country. Our occupation of Iraq has produced a fresh new crop of terrorists. Using military force instead of diplomacy to get Iran to act responsibly will certainly do the same.

In 1999, Mr. Speaker, when America was involved in Kosovo, the then-Governor of Texas said, and I quote him, "Victory means exit strategy, and it's important for the President to explain to us what that exit strategy is." That Governor of Texas is now in the White House. But he is not following his own advice.

The administration has no exit strategy for Iraq. So it is up to Congress to provide one. We must use our power, the power of the purse, to defund the war. Then we must fully fund the safe, orderly and responsible redeployment of our troops' withdrawal and the withdrawal of all military contractors. Then we must launch a vigorous regional and international diplomatic effort to bring peace to Iraq and help it rebuild.

A few years ago, the administration called for an initiative to improve Americans' understanding of history. Our leaders in the White House should start by learning the history of Vietnam.

#### THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I think it is wise from time to time that we in this House reflect upon our heritage, who we are and where we get our dignity as individuals in this country. As a former judge in Texas for over 22 years, I like to spend time in our schools, our elementaries, junior highs, high schools and even our law schools, discussing all aspects of the United States and our history. And I would often ask this question to the groups that I was talking to: "Where do we, as Americans, get our rights?"

Sometimes asking that question would cause people some concern that made them somewhat uncomfortable, especially the elites in our law schools. I would ask those questions to not only law professors but justices on our courts throughout the fruited plain.

But the answers would vary from the students. Some would say we get our rights from our parents. Others would say, well, we get our rights from the President. Even one student last week told me we get our rights from Harry Potter. But most of the kids that I would talk to and most of the professors I would talk to say, well, we get our rights as Americans from government.

All of those answers, I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, are wrong because we don't get our rights from any of those entities. We talk about our rights, we claim we have rights, but we never talk about where we get them. I think it would be easier to describe a story that occurred shortly after the Iron Curtain, as Churchill called it, came down, the Berlin Wall, the wall that separated East from West, freedom from slavery. When the wall came down, there were numerous political prisoners in Eastern Europe that were finally freed but put in prison by those oppressive governments for exercising what they believed to be freedoms. One was a Prague, Czechoslovakian student who had gone to prison for 7 years and was serving time because he was reading on the steps of Prague University a

forbidden document, a document that that Communist regime said that no one shall read in public.

I would like to read a portion of that document here tonight. He quoted someone from the United States. In that statement where he spent 7 years in prison, he stated, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, the pursuit of Happiness, that to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving the just powers from the consent of the governed."

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that Prague student who spent 7 years in prison understood where his rights came from. It was not from government, but it was from the Almighty, the Creator, as quoted in the Declaration of Independence that he chose to read and cost him 7 years of his freedom, that Declaration of Independence that was written and authored by Thomas Jefferson.

Of course that document was the status and the statement and the indictment against King George, not the people of England, but King George, the Government of England, for why the United States had a right to be a separate and independent nation. It was an indictment stating the causes, and finally the Constitution was the government that we set up to preserve the rights in the Declaration of Independence.

We get our rights from the Creator. Because if we get our rights from government, governments can take those rights away from us at any time government wishes to do so. Mr. Speaker, 49 of the 50 States have in their preambles a reference to the Almighty. Many of those preambles mention the fact that they get their rights in the States from the Creator.

The Bill of Rights in our Constitution limits government. Government does not have rights. Government has power. And government gets power from us when we choose to give up individual liberty and give up individual rights. Government has the power to control us and control our liberties only if we let it. So the Bill of Rights and the Constitution says government was set up to protect the rights that we have, those God-given rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In fact, the ninth amendment to the Bill of Rights says there are more rights that aren't even listed in the Bill of Rights that we have.

Mr. Speaker, on the Jefferson Memorial down the street from where we all are is written a quote by Thomas Jefferson which says, "God who gave us Life gave us Liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God?"

Mr. Speaker, if we fail to acknowledge this legal principle of God-given rights, then we deny our heritage as Americans and our reason to be a free people.

And that's just the way it is.

#### STATE CONSTITUTIONS—REFERENCES TO GOD

Alabama 1901, Preamble: We the people of the State of Alabama, invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God, do ordain and establish the following Constitution.

Alaska 1956, Preamble: We, the people of Alaska, grateful to God and to those who founded our nation and pioneered this great land.

Arizona 1911, Preamble: We, the people of the State of Arizona, grateful to Almighty God for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution . . .

Arkansas 1874, Preamble: We, the people of the State of Arkansas, grateful to Almighty God for the privilege of choosing our own form of government . . .

California 1879, Preamble: We, the People of the State of California, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom.

Colorado 1876, Preamble: We, the people of Colorado, with profound reverence for the Supreme Ruler of Universe . . .

Connecticut 1818, Preamble: The People of Connecticut, acknowledging with gratitude the good Providence of God in permitting them to enjoy.

Delaware 1897, Preamble: Through Divine Goodness all men have, by nature, the rights of worshiping and serving their Creator according to the dictates of their consciences.

Florida 1885, Preamble: We, the people of the State of Florida, grateful to Almighty God for our constitutional liberty, establish this Constitution . . .

Georgia 1777, Preamble: We, the people of Georgia, relying upon protection and guidance of Almighty God, do ordain and establish this Constitution . . .

Hawaii 1959, Preamble: We, the people of Hawaii, Grateful for Divine Guidance . . . Establish this Constitution . . .

Idaho 1889, Preamble: We, the people of the State of Idaho, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, to secure its blessings.

Illinois 1870, Preamble: We, the people of the State of Illinois, grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy and looking to Him for a blessing on our endeavors.

Indiana 1851, Preamble: We, the People of the State of Indiana, grateful to Almighty God for the free exercise of the right to choose our form of government.

Iowa 1857, Preamble: We, the People of the State of Iowa, grateful to the Supreme Being for the blessings hitherto enjoyed, and feeling our dependence on Him for a continuation of these blessings establish this Constitution.

Kansas 1859, Preamble: We, the people of Kansas, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious privileges establish this Constitution.

Kentucky 1891, Preamble: We, the people of the Commonwealth are grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberties . . .

Louisiana 1921, Preamble: We, the people of the State of Louisiana, grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberties we enjoy.

Maine 1820, Preamble: We the People of Maine acknowledging with grateful hearts the goodness of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe in affording us an opportunity . . . And imploring His aid and direction.

Maryland 1776, Preamble: We, the people of the state of Maryland, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberty . . .

Massachusetts 1780, Preamble: We . . . the people of Massachusetts, acknowledging with grateful hearts, the goodness of the Great Legislator of the Universe . . . In the

course of His Providence, an opportunity and devoutly imploring His direction . . .

Michigan 1908, Preamble: We, the people of the State of Michigan, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of freedom establish this Constitution.

Minnesota 1857, Preamble: We, the people of the State of Minnesota, grateful to God for our civil and religious liberty, and desiring to perpetuate its blessings:

Mississippi 1890, Preamble: We, the people of Mississippi in convention assembled, grateful to Almighty God, and invoking His blessing on our work. . . .

Missouri 1845, Preamble: We, the people of Missouri, with profound reverence for the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and grateful for His goodness . . . Establish this Constitution.

Montana 1889, Preamble: We, the people of Montana, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of liberty establish this Constitution.

Nebraska 1875, Preamble: We, the people, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom . . . Establish this Constitution.

Nevada 1864, Preamble: We the people of the State of Nevada, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom establish this Constitution.

New Hampshire 1792, Part I. Art. I. Sec. V. Every individual has a natural and unalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience.

New Jersey 1844, Preamble: We, the people of the State of New Jersey, grateful to Almighty God for civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing on our endeavors.

New Mexico 1911, Preamble: We, the People of New Mexico, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of liberty.

New York 1846, Preamble: We, the people of the State of New York, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, in order to secure its blessings.

North Carolina 1868, Preamble: We the people of the State of North Carolina, grateful to Almighty God, the Sovereign Ruler of Nations, for our civil, political, and religious liberties, and acknowledging our dependence upon Him for the continuance of those.

North Dakota 1889, Preamble: We, the people of North Dakota, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, do ordain . . .

Ohio 1852, Preamble: We the people of the state of Ohio, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, to secure its blessings and to promote our common.

Oklahoma 1907, Preamble: Invoking the guidance of Almighty God, in order to secure and perpetuate the blessings of liberty establish this.

Oregon 1857, Bill of Rights, and Article I. Section 2. All men shall be secure in the Natural right, to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their consciences.

Pennsylvania 1776, Preamble: We, the people of Pennsylvania, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, and humbly invoking His guidance.

Rhode Island 1842, Preamble: We the People of the State of Rhode Island grateful to Almighty God for the civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing.

South Carolina 1778, Preamble: We, the people of the State of South Carolina grateful to God for our liberties, do ordain and establish this Constitution.

South Dakota 1889, Preamble: We, the people of South Dakota, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberties.

Tennessee 1796, Art. XI.III. that all men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their conscience . . .

Texas 1845, Preamble: We the People of the Republic of Texas, acknowledging, with gratitude, the grace and beneficence of God.

Utah 1896, Preamble: Grateful to Almighty God for life and liberty, we establish this Constitution.

Vermont 1777, Preamble: Whereas all government ought to enable the individuals who compose it to enjoy their natural rights, and other blessings which the Author of Existence has bestowed on man . . .

Virginia 1776, Bill of Rights, XVI Religion, or the Duty which we owe our Creator can be directed only by Reason and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian Forbearance, Love and Charity towards each other.

Washington 1889, Preamble: We the People of the State of Washington, grateful to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution.

West Virginia 1872, Preamble: Since through Divine Providence we enjoy the blessings of civil, political and religious liberty, we, the people of West Virginia reaffirm our faith in and constant reliance upon God . . .

Wisconsin 1848, Preamble: We, the people of Wisconsin, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, domestic tranquility.

Wyoming 1890, Preamble: We, the people of the State of Wyoming, grateful to God for our civil, political, and religious liberties establish this Constitution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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#### CAMPAIGN SPENDING DOOMSDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, for 60 years, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists has operated the doomsday clock which measures the threat to civilization and counts the minutes under midnight. When it was first introduced in 1947, the doomsday clock measured only the nuclear threat. But now it takes climate change into account as well.

But perhaps we need a different doomsday clock, a clock that will warn us about a different type of arms race that also threatens the future of our Republic. This arms race is not nuclear weaponry but instead uncontrolled escalation in campaign spending. Unbridled campaign spending represents the clearest, most present danger to our democratic ideals as a Republic.

Here is the latest evidence. Just this week, the Center For Responsive Politics released the latest information about campaign spending in the 2008 presidential race.

After 9 months of fundraising, says the Center, "This Presidential money chase seems to be on track to collect an unprecedented \$1 billion total. By some predictions, the eventual nominees will need to raise \$500 million